

VZCZCXRO6323
PP RUEHPA
DE RUEHUJA #3217 3491233
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 151233Z DEC 06
FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8084
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 0018
RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ 0022
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 5753
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 003217

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/13/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [NI](#) [ELECTIONS](#)
SUBJECT: ANPP AND AC TO PRESENT SINGLE CANDIDATE IN 2007
ELECTIONS

Classified By: Political Counselor Russ Hanks for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

11. (U) The All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and the Action Congress (AC) announced an alliance for the 2007 elections on December 13, signing a memorandum of understanding. The Chairman of the ANPP Chief Edwin Ume-Ezeoke and his counterpart from the AC Chief Bisi Akande (former AD governor) "vowed to ensure" that the pact worked.

12. (U) At a ceremony attended by about 200 party activists, the two said that the parties had "agreed on common presidential, gubernatorial and other candidates" for the general elections. They went on to guarantee that, unlike the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), the alliance's candidates would be "credible, patriotic, courageous, independent and capable of performing the duties" of the office.

13. (C) According to several of the Vice President's supporters, the plan for the AC is to ensure that the ANPP cannot nominate General Muhammadu Buhari, thus ensuring the weakness of the party. Then, left with only Atiku as a candidate, they will honor the pact. (NOTE: This strategy assumes that Atiku can clear the hurdles to becoming a candidate, an assumption by no means certain at this point. END NOTE.) According to the ANPP, the alliance has been adopted at "every level except for the Presidency." They then plan to nominate Buhari and when Atiku is screened out, the AC will have to support their candidate.

14. (C) COMMENT: The announcement of this alliance is perhaps a sign that the opposition to President Obasanjo and the PDP is beginning to coalesce. It seems that the strategies on both sides are a bit optimistic, i.e.: Atiku at this point is unlikely to be cleared by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), given the President's obvious animosity to his candidacy, and Buhari does have some problems with control of the ANPP party structure. In any event, the deal may be of little consequence if Buhari is not nominated and Atiku succeeds. Buhari will likely still run on one of the seven parties that have already endorsed his candidacy and the ANPP without his popularity will be a shadow of its former strength. END COMMENT.
CAMPBELL